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REGENTS BRIEF LEADERS ON THE NEXT STEP IN MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Baton Rouge: The Louisiana Board of Regents today briefed government and public interest organization leaders on the next phase of Master Plan implementation designed to fully prepare Louisiana's colleges and universities to meet increased state expectations. Members of Public Affairs Research, Council for a Better Louisiana and the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry joined key administration and legislative leaders in discussing the need to maintain the momentum in higher education by institutionalizing the current reform efforts.

"We were pleased to dialogue with this important group about the need to build coalitions to continue our current advances in postsecondary education. We all realize that significant transformational reform is not an event. It is a process. We must stay the course which takes time. It takes resources and it takes commitment," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie.

Savoie discussed the state's "methodical efforts to build a culture of reform" with a focus on relevance and accountability in order to strengthen public confidence. According to Savoie, the success of that approach has resulted in additional state support for Louisiana's colleges and universities.

The state's Master Plan for Public Postsecondary education is the latest step in the reform process. The plan, which includes new admission requirements for Louisiana's four-year universities, focuses on greater student access to Louisiana's colleges and universities and increased student success.

"Our institutions are vital to the success of this implementation process. We realize that we have an obligation to ensure that our campuses have the appropriate resources in place to transform their recruitment, retention and marketing efforts into a state-of-the-art process. That is what this phase of the Master Plan project is designed to achieve,"

(more)

ADD ONE
REGENTS BRIEF STATE OPINION LEADERS

Regents contracted with Noel Levitz, a world leader in the business of enrollment management to lead the statewide project.

Specifically, the project will provide:

- * Marketing and recruiting plans for each of Louisiana's 13 statewide and regional universities.

- * A statewide marketing research analysis that reviews attitudes and perceptions of parents, students and high school counselors in Louisiana and neighboring states.

- * A complete assessment of the program offerings as well as enrollment potential for Louisiana's forty-two technical college campuses.

- * Professional development and training for staff at Louisiana's four-year universities, community colleges and technical college campuses.

Organization representatives and government leaders pledged their assistance and support to the implementation of the Master Plan. The President of Noel Levitz called this morning's meeting significant.

"What I heard this morning was one of the strongest expressions of commitment to postsecondary education that I have heard in many years. You are doing important work in this state. The core is in place to build even stronger coalitions to support this effort," said Tom Williams, President and CEO of Noel Levitz.

Following the meeting with organizational and government leaders, Noel Levitz stressed the value of the enrollment management project during a kick-off meeting with system heads, campus heads and key campus enrollment management leaders.

"We believe every one of your institutions can be stronger and better if we embrace this initiative and engage in it fully," said Williams.

According to Savoie, there is a sense of urgency surrounding this project. "With Louisiana projected to have a 12 percent decline in the number of high school graduates in the next decade, the conducting of marketing research and the development of comprehensive enrollment management strategies are vital to our campuses and to the viability of our enterprise."

Noel Levitz estimates that the statewide project will be completed in five to six months. However, they pointed out that the process of transforming the state's higher education system will take a sustained effort of attention and resources for the next three to five years.